A Literal Exposition OF TWO PROPHECIES CITED BY St. MATTHEW Out of the Old TESTAMENT,

And said by him to be fulfill'd in the Person of JESUS CHRIST.

The First, in the Seventh Chapter of *Isaiah*, Verse 14. *Behold a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son,* &c.

The Second, in the Eleventh of *Hosea*, Verse 1. *And called my Son out of Egypt.*

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CHAP. I.

THAT our bleſſed Saviour was a Prophet ſent from God, that he was the Son of God, and that the Doctrine which he taught was true, is ſufficiently proved by the divine Miracles which he wrought, particularly by his Reſurrection from the dead; but that he was the *Meſſias* propheſied of in the Old Teſtament, muſt be made appear by the fulfilling, in his own Perſon, the Prophecies relating to the *Meſſias*.

Accordingly, we find, St. *Matthew* mentions ſeveral Prophecies, and ſhows how they were fulfilled in our bleſſed Saviour's own Perſon, or at the time when he was here upon Earth to preach his Goſpel. The firſt Prophecy, of this kind, mentioned by St. *Matthew*, is to be met with in the firſt Chapter of his Goſpel; where he tells us, That *the Birth of Jeſus was on this wiſe; when as his Mother* Mary *was eſpouſed to* Joſeph, *before they came together, ſhe was found with Child of the Holy Ghoſt: then* Joſeph *her Husband being a juſt Man, and not willing to make her a publick Example, was minded to put her away privily: But while he thought on theſe thiugs, behold the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a Dream,*

ſaying, Joſeph *thou Son of* David, *fear not to take unto thee* Mary *thy Wife, for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghoſt: And ſhe ſhall bring forth a Son, and thou ſhalt call his Name Jeſus, for he ſhall ſave his People from their Sins.* (*Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled, which was ſpoken of the Lord by the Prophet, ſaying, Behold, a Virgin ſhall be with Child, and ſhall bring forth a Son, and they ſhall call his Name* Emmanuel; *which being interpreted, is, God with us.*)

This Prophecy is to be found in the ſeventh Chapter of *Iſaiah*, where we are told that King *Ahaz* when he was diſtreſſed by two neighbouring Kings, the King *Syria*, and the King of *Samaria*, and in great danger of having his Kingdom and Country utterly deſtroy'd; a rumour being ſpread abroad, that the two Kings were in Confederacy againſt him, he was ſore afraid; *his Heart was moved, and the Heart of the People, as the Trees of the Wood are moved with the Wind.* Then the Lord ſent *Iſaiah* the Prophet unto him, ſaying, *Go forth now to meet* Ahaz *King of* Judah, *thou, and* Shear-jaſhub *thy Son, at the end of the Conduit of the Upper Pool, in the High-way of the Fuller's-Field.* Accordingly *Iſaiah* went: And *Iſaiah* ſaid unto King *Ahaz, Take heed and be quiet, fear not, neither be faint-hearted, for theſe two Kings having taken evil Counſel againſt thee, ſaying, let us go up againſt* Judah, *and vex it, and let us make a Breach therein for us, and ſet a King in the midſt of it, even the Son of* Tabeal: *Thus ſaith the Lord God, it ſhall not ſtand, neither ſhall it come to paſs: for the Head of* Syria *is* Damaſcus, *and the Head of* Damaſcus *is* Rezin; *and within threeſcore and five Years,* (as the Prophet

Prophet *Amos* foretold) *ſhall* Ephraim *be broken that it be not a People. And the head of* Ephraim *is* Samaria, *and the head of* Samaria *is* Remaliah's *Son; if ye will not believe, ſurely ye ſhall not be eſtabliſhed. And the Lord ſpake moreover unto* Ahaz, *ſaying, Ask thee a Sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the Depth, or in the Height above.* Ask ſome very extraordinary Sign; make your Petition deep.

From the Hiſtorical Relation of this Tranſaction, it does not appear that the Lord bid *Ahaz* ask ſome very extraordinary Sign to confirm him in the Belief of the foregoing Prediction; though the Prophet tells them they ſhall not be eſtabliſhed if they will not believe. *Iſaiah* was a known and an acknowledg'd Prophet at this time in *Judah*, and he had alſo with him his Son *Shear-jaſhub*, who was ſo called in token that the Captives ſhould be ſpeedily ſent back, as they were, to their own Home; all which was very well known to *Ahaz*: He therefore had no reaſon to doubt of, or miſtruſt the Prophet; neither did he, as appears by the Anſwer which he gave when he was commanded to ask a Sign: His Anſwer was, *I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord.* Which Expreſſion of *not tempting the Lord*, ſignifies and imports a putting a ſure Confidence and full Truſt in him: For the Phraſe of tempting God ſignifies and implies, not too much, but too little Confidence; a Diffidence, or Incredulity; as may appear by ſeveral Places wherein the Phraſe is uſed in Holy Scripture, as Dr. *Hammond* very accurately obſerves.

Thus the *Iſraelites* tempting of God in *Exodus* and *Deuteronomy*, is generally doubting of God's Care and Providence, and Power and Wiſdom, of which they had ſo many Arguments, and Aſſurances, and Promiſes from him. And ſo we find *Numbers* the 14th, the tempting God ten times, *v.* 22. is all one with not believing him in all the Signs which he did in the midſt of them, *v.* 11. And what that Unbelief was, appears by their words, *v.* 2. *Would we had died in* Egypt, and *wherefore hath God brought us into this Land?* Thinking (it ſeems) that God would not go along with them, but permit them to be devoured by the People of the Land. So *Pſalm* 78. their provoking and tempting of God, *v.* 18, 19. is, firſt their doubting whether God could, and would prepare them a Table, *v.* 20. *give them Bread, provide them Fleſh in the Wilderneſs*, v. 21. when, by their own confeſſion, he had evidenced his Power, and Will, and Goodneſs ſufficiently, in giving them Streams of Water out of the Rock. And *v.* 42. *they tempted God*, &c. which is explained *v.* 43. by [they thought not of his Hand, and of the Day when he deliver'd them; and how he had wrought his Miracles in *Egypt*, and his Wonders in the Field of *Zoan*; had turned their Rivers into Blood, and their Floods that they could not drink,] *v.* 44. That is to ſay, by their forgetting, or not conſidering the Arguments they had had for the believing and depending on him. And ſo again, after he had *caſt out the Nations before them*, &c. done all for them imaginable, yet, *v.* 57. *they tempted the Moſt High.* So *Iſaiah*, Chap. 7. when *Ahaz* ſaith, *he will not tempt the Lord*, the words ſignify, that he needed no farther Argu-

guments to aſcertain him of the Truth of what was promiſed; he was fully convinced it would come to paſs.

But ſome Commentators imagine, *Ahaz* might have ſpoke theſe words, [*I will not tempt the Lord,*] ironically, becauſe he is reprehended and reproved by the Prophet for Incredulity and wearying of God, and making it neceſſary for God to give him a Sign to confirm his Faith. The Hiſtory, it is certain, ſuppoſes no ſuch thing: *Ahaz* did, indeed, make uſe of human Means; he did ſend to the King of *Aſſyria* for his Aſſiſtance; which thing he might do, and ſtill rely upon God for Succeſs. And the Prophet did reprove him and very reaſonably, for his diſobeying God. God bid him ask a Sign; he, without regarding the Command of the Lord, refuſes to ask a Sign; and for this reaſon it was, the Prophet reproached him, and the Houſe of *David* in theſe words, *Is it a ſmall thing for you to weary Men, but will ye weary my God alſo?* *Ahaz*'s being commanded by God to ask a Sign, might be for ſome other reaſon than to confirm and eſtabliſh him in an undoubted Belief of the predicted Deliverance. It was a ſufficient Favour ſhown to *Ahaz*, a wicked King, to foretel his Deliverance, without confirming that Prediction with a Sign. Beſides, it is abſurd to imagine, that a Man in the utmoſt Diſtreſs and Danger, ſhould refuſe to be certified of his Deliverance if he was in doubt about it, unleſs he was in Deſpair; which *Ahaz* was not, may be proved by his ſending to the King of *Aſſyria* for Aid and Aſſiſtance. And by what follows, it appears, that the Sign was to

confirm a Prediction of a far more extraordinary nature, it was to aſcertain and confirm a very remarkable ſurprizing Prophecy: A Prophecy that required a Sign to aſcertain the fulfilling of it.

Therefore upon *Ahaz*'s refuſing to ask a Sign, the Lord foretels a future ſurprizing Event, and confirms the Truth of it by a Sign. *Behold, ſaith the Lord, a Virgin ſhall conceive and bear a Son, and ſhall call his Name, God with us, or Emmanuel. Butter and Honey ſhall he eat, that he may know to refuſe the Evil, and chooſe the Good.* That is, tho' this Child ſhall be conceived and born after a very uncommon and extraordinary manner, and ſhall be called, *God with us*, yet this very Child ſhall eat the ſame Food that other Children eat; and ſhall increaſe in Wiſdom and Stature as other Children uſually do.

This, though very wonderful and ſurprizing, yet, O Houſe of *David*, believe it, and I will give you this Sign to confirm your Belief; *For before the Child ſhall know to refuſe the Evil, and chooſe the Good, the Land, which thou art in concern for, ſhall be forſaken of both her Kings.* That is, long before all theſe things come to paſs, you ſhall be freed from your Enemies, and from the imminent Danger you are in: Let your Deliverance, therefore, be a Sign and an Aſſurance to you, that what I have foretold will undoubtedly come to paſs.

It was their miraculous Deliverance that was to be to them a Sign and Confirmation of the foreſaid Prophecy, namely, That a Virgin, a pure,

pure, unſpotted Virgin, (for ſo the *Hebrew* word *Almah* always ſignifies) ſhould conceive and bear a Son, *&c.* Afterwards we find it pleaſed God to mark out to them the Time when their Deliverance ſhould come; or when they ſhould be wholly freed from any farther apprehenſion of Danger from the two Kings. God ſends the Prophet, who took with him two faithful Witneſſes, to the Propheteſs, and ſhe conceived and bear a Son; then ſaith the Lord unto the Prophet, call his Name *Maher-ſhalal-haſhbaz*; that is, in making ſpeed to the Spoil, he haſteneth the Prey. And the reaſon for calling the Child by this Name, is, becauſe before the Child ſhall have knowledge to cry, *my Father* and *my Mother*, the Riches of *Damaſcus*, and the Spoil of *Samaria* ſhall be taken away before the King of *Aſſyria*.

This is botha Prophecy and a Sign: It is a Prophecy of the Deliverance of the Houſe of *David*, and alſo in a great meaſure of the Time when that wonderful Deliverance would happen. It was a Sign alſo to *Judah*; for if the miraculous Deliverance of *Judah* was brought to paſs, and within ſuch a compaſs of Time, it was a Sign, an Aſſurance, and Argument to them, that God in due Time would bring to paſs what he had foretold by the mouth of the Prophet, concerning the Seed of the Woman, that a Virgin ſhould conceive and bear a Son: for this reaſon it was, two faithful Witneſſes were made uſe of. It is not to be ſuppoſed that two ſuch faithful Witneſſes were only to record the Conception and Birth of a Son; for it is certain that could not require ſuch a ſolemn Atteſtation: But

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we may reaſonably ſuppoſe the two faithful Witneſſes were called to teſtify the Prophecy, and the Sign given to confirm the Truth of it.

To teſtify and record ſo wonderful, and remarkable, and ſurprizing a Prophecy; and to record the Sign given to evince the Truth of it, was worthy two ſuch faithful Witneſſes as *Uriah* the Prieſt, and *Zechariah* the Son of *Jeberechiah*.

This way of explaining this Paſſage in *Iſaiah*, makes all the Parts of it eaſy and natural: and the Prophecy of the Birth of the *Meſſias*, appears in its full Force and Luſtre.

And, indeed. tho' all the Commentators have taken another Method of explaining this Prophecy, yet have they all agreed in this one thing, That it was certainly a Prophecy relating to the *Meſſias*; the ſolemn Introduction ſhews there was ſomething very extraordinary to be revealed to the Houſe of *David*; *Hear ye, O Houſe of* David, *the Lord himſelf ſhall give you a Sign.*

And the *Hebrew* word *Almah*, made uſe of in the Prophecy, which *Hebrew* word always ſignifying and denoting a young Woman pure and undefiled, has been one reaſon why all Learned Men have thought that this Prophecy muſt have reſpect to the *Meſſias*, and to him alone; and indeed the *Jews* themſelves are very much at a loſs how to put another Interpretation upon the Word. They ſuppoſe the word *Almah* may poſſibly ſometimes ſignify a young married Woman; but to prove

prove this, is more than they are able: The only place in Scripture they would inſtance in, is the 30th Chapter of *Proverbs*, and the 19th Verſe, which does not at all favour them.

But before we end our Diſcourſe of this Prophecy, let us conſider it after the manner that the *Jews* and ſome other Commentators pretend it ought to be underſtood.

They ſay, that King *Ahaz* not being convinced of the Truth of what the Prophet had told him, God bid him ask a Sign, which Sign is ſuppoſed to be in order to convince him; but tho' he was not ſatisfied in what the Prophet told him, as they ſuppoſe, yet out of Diſcontent, and by reaſon of a Perverſeneſs in his Temper, he denies to ask a Sign when God commanded him; yet they ſuppoſe that God, out of a particular favour to him, or to the Houſe of *David*, gives him a Sign to confirm him in the belief of what the Prophet had told him.

The Sign given is this: A young married Woman ſhall conceive and bear a Son. Here certainly is nothing in all this to convince an Unbeliever: A young married Woman is more likely to conceive than not; and it is an equal Chance that ſhe conceives and bears a Son. It is therefore very odd for any Man to imagine that this was a Sign given to *Ahaz*, an obſtinate Unbeliever, to convince him of the Truth of a former Prediction, when he had much better Grounds of Conviction before this Sign or Token of Aſſurance was given to him: for the

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Prophet *Iſaiah* was known to him to be a Prophet; he had propheſied before, and his Predictions came to paſs, and were moſt exactly accompliſh'd. This certainly muſt be more convincing to *Ahaz*, than that a young married Woman ſhould conceive and bear a Son. When a Sign and Token of Aſſurance is given by God to any People, it always conſiſts of ſomething ſurprizing and uncommon, generally contrary to the common Courſe of Nature. So when the *Iſraelites* for their Sins, were oppreſſed by *Midian*, the Angel of the Lord appeared unto *Gideon*, and ſaid unto him, *The Lord is with thee, thou mighty Man of Valour; go in this thy Might, and thou ſhalt ſave* Iſrael *from the hands of the* Midianites. *Then ſaid* Gideon *unto him, If now I have found Grace in thy ſight, then ſhew me a Sign that thou talkeſt with me. And* Gideon *went in, and made ready a Kid, and unleavened Cakes of an Ephah of Flour: the Fleſh he put in a Basket, and he put the Broth in a Pot, and brought it out unto the Angel, under the Oak, and preſented it. And the Angel of God ſaid unto him, Take the Fleſh, and the unleavened Cakes, and lay them upon this Rock, and pour out the Broth; and he did ſo. Then the Angel of the Lord put forth the end of the Staff that was in his hand, and touched the Fleſh, and the unleavened Cakes; and there aroſe up Fire out of the Rock, and conſumed the Fleſh and the unleavened Cakes.* Again, afterwards, at his own requeſt, *Gideon* had another Sign given him. *And* Gideon *ſaid unto God, if thou wilt ſave* Iſrael *by my Hand, as thou haſt ſaid, behold, I will put a Fleece of Wool in the Floor, and if the Dew be on the Fleece only, and it be dry upon all the Earth beſide, then ſhall I know that thou wilt ſave* Iſrael *by mine Hand,*

Hand, as thou haſt ſaid. And it was ſo: for *he roſe up early on the Morrow, and thruſt the Fleece together, and wringed the Dew out of the Fleece, a Bowl full of Water. And* Gideon *ſaid unto God, let not thine Anger be hot againſt me, and I will ſpeak but this once: Let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the Fleece; let it now be dry only upon the Fleece, and upon all the Ground let there be Dew: And God did ſo that Night; for it was dry upon the Fleece only, and there was Dew on all the Ground.* So alſo was a Sign given to *Hezekiah*; *Hezekiah* was ſick unto Death, and the Prophet *Iſaiah* the Son of *Amoz* came to him, and ſaid unto him, *Thus ſaith the Lord, ſet thine Houſe in order, for thou ſhalt die, and not live; then he turned his Face to the Wall, and prayed unto the Lord, ſaying, I beſeech thee, O Lord, remember how I have walked before thee in Truth, and with a perfect Heart, and have done that which is good in thy Sight. And* Hezekiah *wept ſore; and it came to paſs before* Iſaiah *was gone out into the middle Court, that the Word of the Lord came to him, ſaying, Turn again, and tell* Hezekiah *the Captain of my People, thus ſaith the Lord, the God of* David *thy Father, I have heard thy Prayer, I have ſeen thy Tears: Behold, I will heal thee; on the third Day thou ſhalt go up unto the Houſe of the Lord. And I will add unto thy Days fifteen Years, and I will deliver thee, and this City out of the hand of the King of* Aſſyria, *and I will defend this City for mine own ſake, and for my Servant* David's *ſake. And* Iſaiah *ſaid, take a lump of Figs; and they took and laid it on the Boyl, and he recovered. And* Hezekiah *ſaid unto* Iſaiah, *what ſhall be the Sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I ſhall go up into the Houſe of the Lord the third Day? And* Iſaiah *ſaid,*

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this Sign ſhalt thou have of the Lord, that the Lord will do the Thing that he hath ſpoken. Shall the Shadow go forward ten Degrees, or go back ten Degrees? And Hezekiah *anſwered, it is a light thing for the Shadow to go down ten Degrees: nay, but let the Shadow return back ten Degrees. And* Iſaiah *the Prophet cried unto the Lord, and he brought the Shadow ten Degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the Dial of* Ahaz.

Theſe were convincing Signs, which were given by the Lord to *Gideon* and *Hezekiah*; but it is no convincing Sign, eſpecially to one they ſuppoſe to be an obſtinate Infidel, to tell him as a ſign of Aſſurance, that a young married Woman ſhall conceive and bear a Son. However, a Sign was certainly given to the Houſe of *David*, and moſt reaſonable it is to ſuppoſe, it was given to confirm them in, and aſſure them of the truth of the remarkable Prophecy then revealed to them, which Prophecy was this: *A Virgin ſhall conceive, and bare a Son, and ſhall call his Name, God with us: Butter and Honey ſhall he eat, that he may know to refuſe the Evil and chooſe the Good; all this the Lord hath determined ſhall come to paſs; believe it to be true, for before the Child ſhall know to refuſe the Evil and chooſe the Good*; or indeed long before the Child ſhall be born, *the Land that you are in concern for, ſhall be forſaken of both her Kings.* This is the Sign that is given you, to confirm you in a ſure Belief of the foregoing Prophecy.

As if the Prophet had ſaid, you that are now in great Diſtreſs, if you are in a few Years wholly freed and delivered from your Enemies the

the King of *Syria* and the King of *Samaria*, then believe that in future Times, a Virgin, an immaculate Virgin ſhall conceive and bear a Son, and ſhall call his name *Emmanuel*, or *God with us*.

The Prophets foretelling things future, often, to aſcertain to the People they propheſied, the Truth of their Predictions; they gave them a Sign, a remarkable and ſurprizing Event ſhould happen in their own Days, which ſhould be to them a Sign, and an Aſſurance of the Truth of what the Prophet told them; and ſo it was in the caſe before us. The People of *Judah*, then in imminent Danger and great Diſtreſs, were delivered from their Enemies; and this miraculous Deliverance was to convince them and aſſure them that ſometime or other a Virgin, a pure and undefiled Maid, ſhould conceive and bear a Son, according to the Prophet's Prediction. Well therefore might St. *Matthew*, ſpeaking by the Spirit of God, ſay, *Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken of the Lord by the Prophet, ſaying, Behold, a Virgin ſhall be with Child, and ſhall bring forth a Son, and they ſhall call his Name* Emmanuel, *which being interpreted, is*, God with us.

But perhaps, it may be wondered at by ſome Men, how ſo remarkable a Prophecy as this could be paſs'd over in ſilence by the *Jewiſh* Writers; yet that Wonder will ceaſe, when we call to mind the Blindneſs and Perverſeneſs of the Generality of the *Jews*; they were indeed the People from among whom the Prophets were raiſed up, and to whoſe keeping the Prophecies were committed, yet they did not always underſtand them. *Iſaiah*

Iſaiah himſelf gives us this account of the Blindneſs and Obſtinacy of the *Jews* of his own time; this account he gives us juſt before he relates his being ſent to *Ahaz*; it is to be met with in the ſixth Chapter of *Iſaiah*, it is delivered in theſe Words, *I heard the Voice of the Lord, ſaying, whom ſhall I ſend, and who will go for us? Then ſaid I, here am I, ſend me: And he ſaid, go and tell this People, hear ye indeed, but underſtand not; ſee ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the Heart of this People fat, and make their Ears heavy, and ſhut their Eyes, leſt they ſee with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and underſtand with their Hearts, and convert, and be healed.* The *Jews* might miſtake the Senſe of moſt of the Prophecies relating to the *Meſſias*, thro' their peculiar Pride and Carnality, otherwiſe they would not have denyed the Holy one, and the Juſt, and deſired a Murderer to be granted unto them.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

WHEN the wiſe Men from the Eaſt had made their Offerings to the Infant-Child Jeſus, and were departed into their own Country, the Angel of the Lord appeared to *Joſeph* in a Dream, ſaying, *Ariſe, and take the young Child and his Mother, and flee into* Egypt, *and be thou there until I bring thee word*; *for* Herod *will ſeek the young Child to deſtroy him. When he aroſe, he took the young Child, and his Mother by Night, and departed into* Egypt, *and was there until the death of* Herod; *that it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken of the Lord by the Prophet, ſaying, Out of* Egypt *have I called my Son.*

God had formerly foretold to the *Jews* by the Prophet *Hoſea*, that he would call his Son out of *Egypt*; and now St. *Matthew* tells us, that this Prophecy of calling God's Son out of *Egypt* was fulfilled at this Time. We have therefore all the reaſon in the World to believe it, becauſe St. *Matthew*, who was endued with power from on High, and was one of thoſe Diſciples who was at *Jeruſalem* on the Day of Pentecoſt, when ſuddenly there came a Sound from Heaven, as of a ruſhing mighty Wind, and filled all

the Houſe where they were ſitting ; and there appeared to them cloven Tongues, like as of Fire, and it ſat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt ; tells us expreſly that this Prophecy had its Completion at this very Time ; namely, when the Child Jeſus was brought out of *Egypt* by his reputed Father *Joſeph*, at God's Command.

This Prophecy in *Hoſea*, cited by St. *Matthew*, has been the ſubject Matter of great Debate and Contention, even from the earlieſt Times of Chriſtianity : Some alledging that they could not ſee or perceive that this was any Prophecy meant or deſign'd by God, when he declared by the Mouth of his Prophet, ſaying, *Out of* Egypt *have I called my Son* ; they ſaid the Words related to a paſt Action ; which was, to the calling the Children of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt* by the hands of *Moſes* and *Aaron*. But others, upon the Credit of St. *Matthew*, maintained and truly believed it was a Prophecy, and that it was either literally or allegorially fulfilled when Jeſus was brought out of *Egypt*, he being the true and only Son of God.

What the Chriſtians pleaded and alledged in this Debate, was a ſufficient Satisfaction to themſelves, and had its due Weight with them, and with all thoſe who did really believe St. *Matthew* to be an inſpired Writer : but with the *Jews* it was otherwiſe, they believed no ſuch thing, they were blinded and prejudiced and could not ſee ; they pretended at leaſt that they could not underſtand the Words before quoted,

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to mean any Prophecy or Prediction, but that they were only Hiſtorical: yet that the words are as prophetically ſpoken as the Words of other Prophecies in the Bible are, is plain; for inſtance, when *Samuel* propheſied and foretold to *Saul* the loſs of the Kingdom of *Iſrael* to himſelf and his Family, he utters it in theſe Words, as it may be ſeen in the fifteenth Chapter of the firſt Book of *Samuel*, and the twenty-eighth Verſe: *The Lord hath rent the Kingdom of* Iſrael *from thee this Day, and hath given it to a Neighbour of thine, that is better than thou.* Which words are to be underſtood after this manner, that God had then determined to take the Kingdom from him, and give it to *David:* not that it was actually then done; for as the Hiſtory tells us, *Saul* enjoyed the Kingdom after this Prophecy was declared; but it was then that Day determined by God himſelf, that it ſhould be ſo: and this way of expreſſing themſelves, was very common with the Prophets. When the Lord had determined to rend the Kingdom from *Saul*, then was it the ſame thing as if it had been already done: For as *Samuel* ſaith to *Saul*, in the Words immediately following the Prophecy, *The Strength of* Iſrael *will not lye nor repent: for he is not a Man, that he ſhould repent.* Sometimes indeed the Prophets propheſied conditionally, that if the People did not repent and amend their ways, and leave off their idolatrous Practices, ſome heavy Judgment would befall them; but if they did heartily repent, the Sentence ſhould be reverſed.

But when the Lord, by his Prophets, ſaith, *I have done ſuch a Thing*; it imports that the Lord hath determined it, and will moſt aſſuredly bring it to paſs; as in the caſe before us, when the Lord, by the Prophet *Hoſea*, ſaith, *Out of* Egypt *have I called my Son*; it is to be underſtood as if he had ſaid, I have determined to bring my Son out of *Egypt*, and I will moſt certainly do it.

It may not be amiſs for us to hear what *Vigerus*, a great Critick in prophane Authors, ſaith in relation to this Matter: his Words are theſe; *Præteritum aliquando pro futuro ponitur.*

Ἔργων ἀντ' ἀδίκων χαλεπὴν ἐπέθηκεν ἀμοιβήν.

Heſiod.

Pro operibus iniquis gravem exhibebit talionem.

Ἐπέθηκεν *hîc poſitum eſt pro* ἐπιθήσει. *Locutio emphatica, & ſummam rei futuræ indicat certitudinem: nempe hanc rem tam certo futuram, ac ſi jam facta eſſet.* Hence it appears by the Stile uſed in the Holy Scriptures, and alſo in prophane Authors, that the Words ſpoken by the Mouth of the Prophet *Hoſea* might be ſpoken prophetically, when the Prophet perſonating God, ſaith, *Out of* Egypt *have I called my Son.* St. *Matthew*, as I ſaid before, produceth it as a Prophecy, and ſays it was fulfilled when the Child Jeſus was brought by *Joſeph* out of *Egypt*, who had fled thither by God's Command, to avoid the inhuman Practices of *Herod.*

Neither

Neither do I know any good Reaſon the *Jews* have to deny the words of the Prophet *Hoſea*, before cited, to be a Prophecy, or that it was fulfilled according to St. *Matthew's* Goſpel: they tell us indeed, the words are hiſtorically, and not prophetically ſpoken; and thus do they comment upon them, taking the whole Verſe together: *When* Iſrael *was a Child, then I loved him, and called my Son out of* Egypt: that is to ſay, when the People of *Iſrael* was a Child, that is, in a State of Childhood; namely, during the Generations of *Jacob*, and his twelve Sons the Patriarchs of the twelve Tribes, and ſo at their firſt coming into *Egypt*, then I loved him, becauſe he walked in Obedience to me; and out of my ſaid Love, when the due time was come, by *Moſes* I called him as my Son, or peculiar People out of *Egypt*. With this account here given, ſome learned Men reſt ſatisfied, and conclude that the words ſpoken of the Lord by the Prophet *Hoſea*, *Out of* Egypt *have I called my Son*, was no Prophecy.

But others ſay, that as herein *Iſrael* was a Type of what God ſhould do afterwards in reſpect of the Child Jeſus, ſo the ſame was literally fulfilled by God's calling *Joſeph* to come out of *Egypt*, together with the Child Jeſus, who is literally the Son of God. And this Account here given, was a ſufficient Satisfaction to the true well-meaning Chriſtian; he believed the Words ſpoken by the Prophet to have been Prophetical, and to have been fulfilled when Jeſus was brought out of *Egypt*.

St. *Matthew* has affirmed, that it was a Prophecy, and that the ſaid Prophecy was fulfilled when Jeſus came out of *Egypt*; which muſt needs be a good Argument, and ſtrong Motive, with every true Chriſtian, to believe it. Beſides, when the words are thoroughly conſidered, we ſhall find they were not hiſtorical, containing the Relation of a paſt Action; but that they were prophetical, foretelling that God would ſome time or other bring his only Son our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt out of *Egypt*.

The Prophet *Hoſea* is reproving the People of *Iſrael* for their Ingratitude to God; eſpecially for their baſe Ingratitude in worſhipping of Idols, when they ought to have loved God, and to have worſhipped him only. To make therefore this Accuſation of Ingratitude good againſt them, and their Fore-fathers, he tells them what great Things God had and would do for them; here the Prophet perſonating God, utters himſelf after this manner: *When* Iſrael, (or *Jacob*, who is otherwiſe called *Iſrael*) *was a Child, then I loved him.* Here was the greateſt Inſtance of God's Love and Kindneſs to the *Iſraelites*, tho' indeed the bringing them out of *Egypt*, out of the Houſe of Bondage and Slavery, was a very great Kindneſs; yet it was not to be compared to that other Inſtance of God's Love, his making them his choſen People.

The Prophet *Malachi* alſo expoſtulating with the *Jews* of his Time, he upbraids them for their Impieties and Idolatry, and great Ingratitude

to

to that God who had made them his choſen People, who had loved them even before they were a People; his Words are theſe: *I have loved you, ſaith the Lord: yet ye ſay, wherein haſt thou loved us? Was not* Eſau Jacob's *Brother? ſaith the Lord; yet I loved* Jacob, *and hated* Eſau, *and laid his Mountains and his Heritage waſte, for the Dragons of the Wilderneſs*; *Malachi* the firſt Chapter, and the ſecond and third Verſes. Here ſeems intimated a Reproof of *Iſrael* for their great Ingratitude and Unkindneſs to the Lord, whilſt he tells them, that certainly they ought to have loved him, ſince that he had firſt loved them, and ought therefore to have found grateful Returns of Love from them: But how contrary Behaviour he found from them, he ſhews in that Queſtion, which he ſays, that inſtead of a ready Acknowledgement of his Love, they were ready to put; implying little leſs then an abſolute Denial of his Kindneſs, *Yet ye ſay, wherein haſt thou loved us?* When at the ſame time the Lord had made them his choſen People, had delivered them from the *Egyptian* Bondage, and upon ſeveral Occaſions had freed them from their moſt potent Enemies: yet they foregetting the Loving-kindneſs of the Lord towards them, perſiſted to mutter among themſelves, ſaying, What are the Inſtances wherein the Lord hath ſhown his particular Kindneſs to us?

So that the Lord ſeeing it neceſſary, by a particular Inſtance or Proof to make evident wherein he had ſhewed his ſingular Love to them, anſwers thus by asking them a Queſtion,

Was not Eſau Jacob's *Brother? Yet I loved* Jacob, *and hated* Eſau.

This the Lord gives as an Inſtance of his free Love to the *Iſraelites*, the Poſterity of *Jacob* or *Iſrael*, that whereas *Eſau* and *Jacob* were Twin-Brothers, one as well as the other deſcended from *Abraham*, both Sons of *Iſaac* by one Mother, Twins, born at the ſame time; yet he loved one, and did not love, or hated the other, and derived that Love and Hatred to their Poſterity, and accordingly ſhewed to them the Tokens and Effects thereof. The Apoſtle St. *Paul*, in the 11th Chapter to the *Romans*, argues thus:

When Rebecca *had conceived by one, even by our Father* Iſaac (*for the Children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the Purpoſe of God, according to Election, might ſtand, not of Works, but of him that calleth*) *it was ſaid unto her, The Elder ſhall ſerve the Younger; as it is written,* Jacob *have I loved, but* Eſau *have I hated. What ſhall we ſay then? Is there unrighteouſneſs with God? God forbid. For he ſaith to* Moſes, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy; and I will have compaſſion on whom I will have compaſſion. So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that ſheweth mercy.*

The Apoſtle here improveth this Argument from hence, that this Love to the one, and Hatred to the other, was declared, when thoſe Children were yet unborn; neither had they done

done any Good or Evil; ſo that it could not be ſaid one had deſerved better than the other; and therefore God's Love to one above the other, muſt needs appear to be of Free-Grace and Choice, electing one, and rejecting the other; and the Diſtinction or Difference that he made between them, may be illuſtrated by the ſeveral Advantages that by his Love one had over the other in ſeveral matters. But the literal Explication of the Words here intended, requires no more than the View of the particular Effect of his Love to *Jacob*'s Poſterity, and Hatred to *Eſau*'s, here inſtanced in: That is to ſay, the utter Deſolation of *Eſau*'s Country, and the Reſtitution of *Iſrael*'s, when he had given them both into the hand of their Enemies, to be puniſhed for their Sins; that Puniſhment proving to the one, for their utter Deſtruction; to the other, but as a fatherly Chaſtiſement, to make them ſenſible of their Errors, and to amend them, that ſo they might again be reconciled to him, and taken into favour. Of *Eſau*, therefore (or his Poſterity the *Edomites*) he ſays, that he declared his Hatred to him (or them called by his Name) in that he laid his Mountains and his Heritage waſte, for the Dragons of the Wilderneſs.

Thus we ſee how God loved *Jacob* when a Child, and hated his Brother *Eſau*. And from hence we may conclude the Prophet *Hoſea* accuſing the *Jews* for their Ingratitude to God: God, by the mouth of the Prophet, reproaching them for their Ingratitude to him, telling them, that when *Iſrael* was a Child, he lo-

loved him, is to be interpreted and underſtood after the ſame manner: That is to ſay, when *Jacob*, otherwiſe called *Iſrael*, was a Child, God loved him. We find the Prophet *Hoſea*, in another Place, calling *Jacob* by the name of *Iſrael*, in the twelfth Chapter, and twelfth Verſe of his Prophecy. *And* Jacob *fled into the Country of* Syria; *and* Iſrael *ſerved for a Wife, and for a Wife he kept Sheep.* Here, it is plain, the Prophet makes uſe of either Name indifferently, calling the ſame Perſon ſometimes *Iſrael*, ſometimes *Jacob*. It was therefore God's Love to *Jacob*, that God inſiſts upon, as the great Inſtance of his Kindneſs ſhewn to the *Jews*. And, indeed, it was the greateſt Kindneſs that God had done for them; for by that means they became the choſen People of God. Their Deliverance out of Bondage, when they were in the Land of *Egypt*, was a peculiar Inſtance of God's Favour to them; but that Deliverance, as all the other Deliverances God wrought for them, were in conſequence only of their being the Choſen and Elect People. It was God's Love to *Jacob*, or *Iſrael*, that was the Foundation of all his Favours ſhown afterwards to the *Iſraelites*.

Beſides what hath been already ſaid, let us compare the two Interpretations of this Paſſage in *Hoſea* together, and ſee which Interpretation is moſt Literal, and leſs Figurative of the two. *When* Jacob *was a Child, I loved him*, is interpreted by moſt Expoſitors to mean, when the People of *Iſrael* were in a State of Childhood, then ſaith God, *I loved him.* Or

it may be explained thus: *When* Iſrael, *(that is* Jacob) *was a Child, God loved him.* It is not to be denied but that *Iſrael* in Holy Scripture is frequently put to mean the Children or People of *Iſrael*; and God alſo calls *Iſrael*, meaning the Children of *Iſrael, his Son, his Firſt-born*, as we may read in the fourth Chapter of *Exodus*, where God ſpeaking unto *Moſes*, ſaith, *Thou ſhalt ſay unto* Pharaoh, *Thus ſaith the Lord*, Iſrael *is my Son, even my Firſt-born; and I ſay unto thee, Let my Son go, that he may ſerve me: And if thou refuſe to let him go, behold, I will ſlay thy Son, even thy Firſt-born.*

But ſtill to ſay, when *Iſrael* was a Child, meaning thereby, when the Common-Wealth of *Iſrael* was in its Infancy, is very Figuratively expreſs'd; and where a literal Meaning of the Words may be had, a figurative Senſe ought not to be admitted. On the other hand, if *Iſrael* is there put for *Jacob*, as it often is by the Prophets, the two Names being indifferently uſed for the ſame Perſon, the Expoſition is Literal; and where a Literal Expoſition of any Place in Scripture may be had, there both *Jews* and *Chriſtians* have always agreed it ought to be made uſe of. Alſo, when one Man accuſes another of Ingratitude, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe he will inſtance in the greateſt Kindneſs he had ever done for him, whereon to ground his Accuſation of Ingratitude. Let us now ſuppoſe the ſame to be done between God and his choſen People; which if we do, we muſt put this Expoſition upon the Words: *When* Iſrael, *that is* Jacob, *was a Child, God*

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loved him, and will moſt certainly call his Son, (meaning our bleſſed Saviour, who is literally the Son of God) *out of* Egypt; becauſe theſe were the greateſt Kindneſſes and Favours God had done, or deſigned to do for his People. The chooſing *Jacob*, and refuſing *Eſau*, as I ſhewed before, was a much greater Kindneſs done to the *Iſraelites*, than the freeing them from the mercileſs Hand of *Pharaoh*; but this was not all, there was a farther Kindneſs alſo mentioned, which was God's bringing his Son out of *Egypt*; which was a moſt ſignal and extraordinary Favour ſhown by God to the *Jews*. For if our bleſſed Saviour had remained in *Egypt*, the *Jews* had not been the People to whom the Goſpel had been firſt preached; and though the generality of the *Jews* rejected Chriſt and his Goſpel, yet the Favour ſhown unto them herein was very great: For as our Saviour ſaith unto his Diſciples, *Bleſſed are your Eyes, for they ſee; and your Ears, for they hear And verily I ſay unto you, that many Prophets and righteous Men have deſired to ſee thoſe things which ye ſee, and have not ſeen them; and to hear thoſe things which ye hear, and have not heard them.* God's calling his Son out of *Egypt*, therefore, was a very extraordinary Inſtance of his Love to the Nation and People of the *Jews*; for thereby they ſaw and heard thoſe things which others weret not permitted to hear and ſee.

Here, then, we have the two greateſt Inſtances of God's Love and Favour to thoſe People; the firſt, in chooſing them for his own peculiar People; the laſt, in calling his Son from a-

among the Heathen, to preach the Goſpel unto them.

In ſhort, this Interpretation of the Words is the moſt literal, the moſt agreeable to the Prophet's Meaning and Deſign; and moſt exactly agrees with what St. *Matthew*, who was an inſpired Writer, tells us, when he ſays, that *Jeſus, the Son of God, was carried into* Egypt, *and returned from* Egypt *after the death of* Herod, *and dwelt in the Land of* Iſrael, *that it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken of the Lord by the Prophet, ſaying, Out of* Egypt *have I called my Son.*

The three firſt Verſes of the eleventh Chapter of *Hoſea*, are theſe: *When* Iſrael *was a Child, then I loved him, and called my Son out of* Egypt. 2. *As they called them, ſo they went from them; they ſacrificed unto* Baalim, *and burnt Incenſe to graven Images.* 3. *I taught* Ephraim *alſo to go, taking them by their Arms, but they knew not that I healed them.* Paraphraſed thus: When *Iſrael* was a Child, then I loved him, and prefer'd him before his Brother *Eſau*: and I have determin'd to call my Son Jeſus out of *Egypt.* Theſe Favours have I ſhown to you, O ye *Iſraelites*, and to your Fore-fathers, but neither you, nor they have been dutiful Sons in many reſpects; for as they, *viz.* my Prophets, called on them, your Anceſtors, to cleave obediently to me, ſo inſtead thereof, they went from me, contrary to the Calls of them who were my Prophets; or their other lawful Teachers appointed by me; even they ſacrificed unto *Baalim,*

lim, and burnt Incenſe to graven Images. I taught *Ephraim* alſo to go, taking them by their Arms, as Mothers are wont to do, when they teach their Children to go; *i. e.* it was I that brought them out of *Egypt*, and conducted them into the Land of *Canaan*, and enabled them to withſtand their Enemies, which they had not Human Force to do: But they knew, *i. e.* conſider'd not that I healed them, *i. e.* conducted them with Safety and Health thro' the Wilderneſs.

FINIS.

N. B. THE Author propoſes hereafter to ſhew how all the Prophecies cited by St. *Matthew*, were literally fulfill'd in the Perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, or at that time when he appear'd upon Earth.

Lately publiſhed,

THE Errors and Abſurdities of the *Arian* and *Semi-Arian* Schemes, and eſpecially the *Polytheiſm* and *Idolatry* by which they have corrupted the Chriſtian Faith. Repreſented in Eight Sermons, preached at the Cathedral of St. *Paul* in *London*, in the Years 1724, 1725, at the Lecture founded by the late Worthy Lady *Moyer*. To which is added, *Concio ad Clerum in Eccleſia Beatæ Mariæ Cantabrigienſi habita Quinto Nonas* Julij, *Anno Salutis Humanæ*, 1725. By *Tho. Biſhop*, D. D. Miniſter of St. *Mary* at *Tower-Church* in *Ipſwich, Suffolk*. Printed for *Bernard Lintot* at the *Croſs-Keys*, between the *Temple-Gates* in *Fleet-Street*. Where may be had, the Rev. Mr. *Gretton's* Review of the Argument *à Priori*, in relation to the Being and Attributes of God, in Reply to Dr. *Clark*. With ſome Extracts from Mr. *Locke*, concerning the ſame.